

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: SOPN, EFIN, CA

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO REPORT OF CANADAIN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON
RELATIONSHIP

REF: OTTAWA 3060

1. BOTH THE TORONTO SUN AND THE TORONTO STAR OF JULY 28 HAD
EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE JUST-RELEASED REPORT OF THE CANADAIN-
AMERICAN COMMITTEE WHICH EXAMINED THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, NEITHER EDITORIAL DIRECTED ITSELF TO
THE MAIN POINTS OF THE REPORT.

2. THE TORONTO SUN USED ITS EDITORIAL TO TAKE A BRAOD SWIPE
AT THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT AND SAID THAT IT ISN'T "SURPRISING"
THAT THE U.S. SHOULD HAVE PROBLEMS WITH CANADA, CANADAIS TOO
HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE DIRECTION WHICH CANADA (UNDER TRUDEAU)
SEEMS TO BE TAKING. THE TORONTO STAR, AS COULD HAVE BEEN
PREDICTED, USED ITS EDITORIAL TO ONCE AGAIN MOUNT A SOAP BOX
AND PROSELYTIZE FOR "CANADA'S EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GREATER
ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL INDEPENDENCE." "ALARMIST REPORTS ON THE NATURAL
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DIFFERENCES THAT ARISE BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WHEN THEY HAVE

DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES, SUCH AS THE CANADAIN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE SUDY, SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DETER CANADAINS FROM PURSUING THEIR NATIONAL INTERESTS. WHAT UNITES CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES IS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, MUCH STRONGER THAN WHAT DIVIDES THE TWO."

3. ROBERT MACINTOSH, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE WAS ON CFRB RADIO ON JULY 27 TO DISCUSS THE REPORT. HE SAID THAT THE MAIN THRUST OF THE REPORT ON U.S./CANADAIN RELATIONS WAS THAT TOO OFTEN DECISIONS WERE BEING MADE UNILATERALLY AND WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS. PROBLEMS OF UNILATERALISM ARISE MORE FREQUENTLY IN CANADA S PROVINCES TAKE DECISIONS AFFECTING THE U.S.WITHOUT PRIOR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CANADAIN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. MACINTOSH POINTED OUT THE DANGEROUS PRECEDENT OF UNILATERAL ACTION USING BC GAS AS THE EXAMPLE. HE SAID IF THE U.S. RECIPROCATED UNILATERALLY BY CUTTING OFF PENNSYLVANIA COAL, ONTARIO WOULD LOST 37 PERCENT OF ITS TOTAL ENERGY SOURCING. MACINTOSH ALSO TERMED FIRA AS BAD LEGISLATION WHICH HAS HAD A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON INVESTMENT AND IS OPPOSED IN ITS PRESENT FORM BY THE COMMITTEE'S AMERICAN AND CANADAIN MEMBERS, ALTHOUGH THE COMMITTEE HAS NO POLICY POSITION. HE QUESTIONED SUCCESS OF CANADAIN EFFORTS TO DIRECT TRADE TO EUROPE AND THE ORIENT AND GAVE AS A POSITIVE FACTOR IN US-CANADAIN RELATIONSHIP THE STRONG TRADE TIES WHICH HE FELT WOULD CONTINUE.

4. JOHN BELANGER, IN HIS CKFM RADIO BUSINESS COMMENTS JULY 28, ECHOED THE COLUMN OF RONALD ANDERSON IN THE GLOBE & MAIL OF JULY 28. TO WIT, THAT THE CANADAIN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE WAS SOMEWHAT EXTREME IN ITS CRITICISM OF CANADA FOR STICKING UP FOR THAT COUNTRY'S NATIONAL INTERST IN POLICY DIFFERENCES WITH THE U.S. ON JULY 29 BELANGER'S PROGRAM EXAMINED WAYS IN WHICH THE US COULD REACT TO CANADAIN ACTIONS AND RECOGNISED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF RECIPROCITY IN UNILATERAL ACTS HAS TO BE ACCEPTED.

5. CTV'S TELEVISION NEWS "BACKGROUND" JULY 28 CHARACTERIZED THE REPOT AS EXCESSIVE IN UNDERSTATING THE BASIC STRONG TIES WHICH BIND THE TWO NATIONS AND BOICED SURPRISE AT EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER MACEACHEN'S READY ACCEPTANCE OF THE REPORT'S UNCLASSIFIED

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CONCLUSIONS. IN AN EXTREME COMMENT, CFRB'S RADIO NEWS JULY 27 SAID THE COMMITTEE REPRESENTED BIG CORPORATIONS AND BANKS AND THAT THE TRUE STRENGTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP WAS REFLECTED BY THE MILLIONS OF TOURISTS WHO CROSSED THE BORDER FREELY IN BOTH DIRECTIONS AND IN THE STRONG SOCIAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO POPULATIONS.

6. COMMENT: MEDIA REACTIONCONFIRMS THE STATEMENT IN

THE REPORT THAT "PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ARE SHAPED BY DRAMATIC
ACCOUNTS" AND "MEDIA REPORTING....TENDS TO FOCUS UPON CURRENT
POLICY DISPUTES." IN THIS REGARD, THE USE OF THE VERB
"FESTER" IN THE SECOND SENTENCE OF THE INTRODUCTION PERHAPS
HAS INFLUENCED MORE REACTION FROM DEADLINE-PRESSED JOURNALISTS
THAN THE BODY OF THE REPORT. MOST REACTION HAS MISSED THE
POINT OF THE EXERCISE AS THE GOALS OF THE COMMITTEE, IN GENERAL
AND IN THE REPORT, ARE APPARENTLY NOT UNDERSTOOD. THE TORONTO
GLOBE & MAIL'S JULY 28 EDITORIAL WAS PERHAPS THE MOST
BALANCED. "IT WOULD NOT BE FAIR TO WRITE THE COMMITTEE OFF AS
A PACK OF CONTINENTALISTS OR AS SUBSERVIENT TO THE US
VIEW, ALTHOUGH THAT WILL BE DONE. IT WOULD BE MORE FAIR TO
SAY THAT THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT IS REALISTIC."
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